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› August 2019



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Characteristics of Employment, Australia

Weekly earnings of employees classified by full-time/part-time workers, employment characteristics and fixed-term/independent contracts

Reference period August 2019

Released 9/12/2019

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Key statistics

- Median employee earnings was \$1,100 per week, up by 2.3% since August 2018.
- More employed people had access to flexible hours, while fewer usually worked overtime or were on call.
- Independent contractors were most likely to work in Construction or Professional, scientific and technical services.

Main features

Earnings for Australians

Median Weekly Earnings	August 2019	August 2018	August 2014	2018 to 2019 (% change)	2014 to 2019 (% change p.a.)
Employees	\$1 100	\$1 075	\$1 000	2.3%	1.9%
Male Employees	\$1 275	\$1 259	\$1 175	1.3%	1.6%
Female Employees	\$950	\$911	\$825	4.3%	2.9%

Median Hourly Earnings	August 2019	August 2018	August 2014	2018 to 2019 (% change)	2014 to 2019 (% change p.a.)
Employees	\$32.50	\$31.30	\$28.60	3.8%	2.6%
Male Employees	\$34.20	\$32.90	\$30.10	4.0%	2.6%
Female Employees	\$31.10	\$30.00	\$26.70	3.7%	3.1%

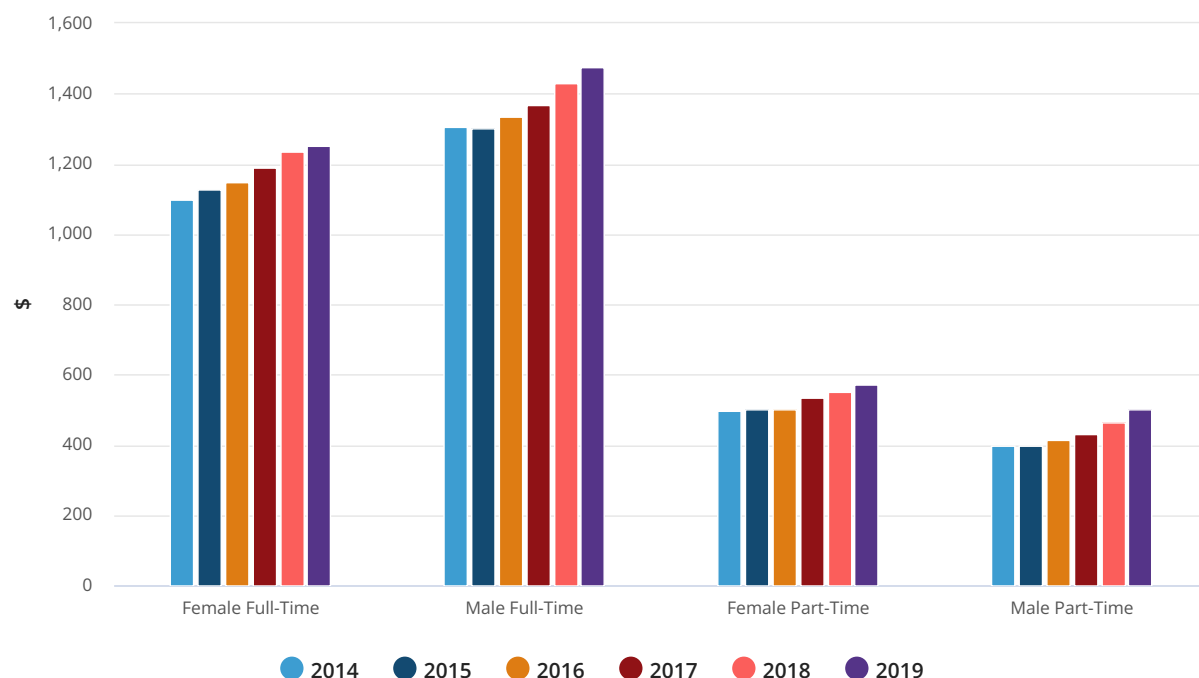
Weekly Earnings	August 2019	August 2018	August 2014	2018 to 2019 (% change)	2014 to 2019 (% change p.a.)
10th Percentile	\$345	\$340	\$300	1.5%	2.8%
25th Percentile	\$700	\$684	\$608	2.3%	2.9%
50th Percentile	\$1 100	\$1 075	\$1 000	2.3%	1.9%
75th Percentile	\$1 651	\$1 602	\$1 500	3.1%	1.9%
90th Percentile	\$2 416	\$2 348	\$2 150	2.9%	2.4%

Source: Tables 1 and 2.

In August 2019, median weekly earnings for employees was \$1,100, increasing from \$1,075 in 2018. Median weekly earnings increased at a slower rate for male employees than female employees over the past 5 years, in part because the proportion of male employees working part-time increased.

The lowest and highest earnings quantiles grew slightly faster than the median. Earnings for the 10th and 25th percentile increased by 2.8% per annum (p.a.) and 2.9% p.a. respectively, and the 90th percentile by 2.4% p.a., compared to 1.9% p.a. growth in the median over the last 5 years.

Graph 1 - Median weekly earnings by sex and full-time or part-time



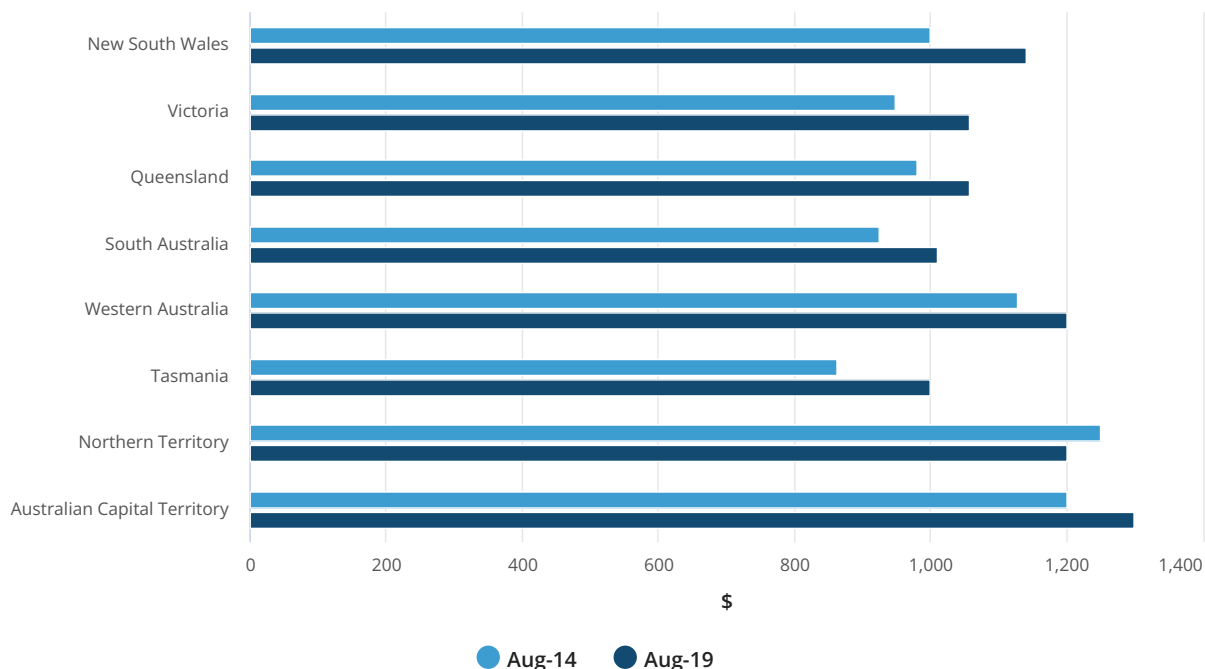
Source: Tables 1 and 2.

Information about all of the ABS sources of earnings and income data can be found in the information paper ABS Labour Statistics: A broad range of information.

Earnings for states and territories

The state or territory with the highest median weekly earnings was the Australian Capital Territory at \$1,300 per week, followed by Western Australia and the Northern Territory whose median earnings were both \$1,200 per week. The lowest were Tasmania (\$1,000 per week) and South Australia (\$1,010 per week).

Graph 2 - Median weekly earnings for employees by state and territory



Source: Table 1.

Of the state capital cities, Perth and Sydney had the highest median weekly earnings at \$1,200 per week.

Outside the capital cities, the highest median weekly earnings was regional Western Australia at \$1,225 per week, and the lowest was regional Victoria at \$950 per week.

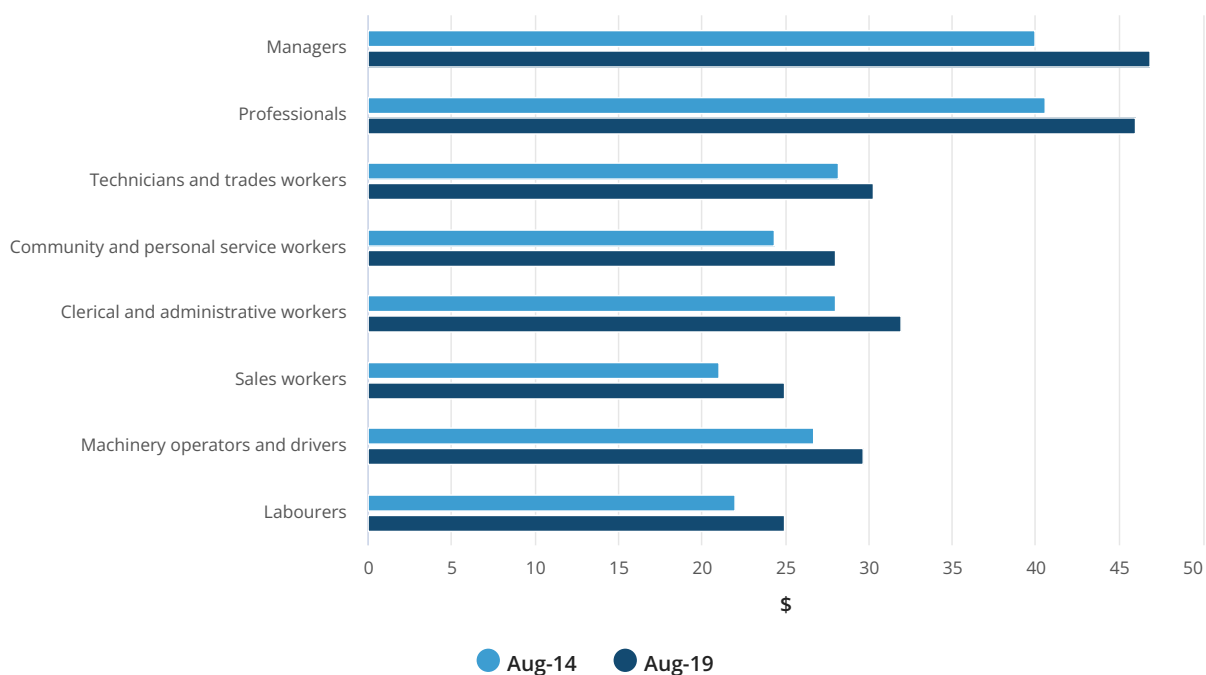
Earnings by occupation of main job

In August 2019, the occupations with highest median weekly earnings were Managers (\$1,726 per week) and Professionals (\$1,500 per week), while the lowest were Labourers (\$749 per week) and Sales workers (\$600 per week).

These occupations also had the highest and lowest median hourly rate. Managers (\$46.90) and Professionals (\$46.00) recorded the highest hourly rate, while Sales workers and

Labourers earned \$25.00 per hour. The gap between the median hourly rates for occupations is smaller than for the weekly measure, partly due to the difference in hours typically worked for each occupation.

Graph 3 - Median hourly earnings for employees by occupation



Source: Table 4.

Earnings by industry of main job

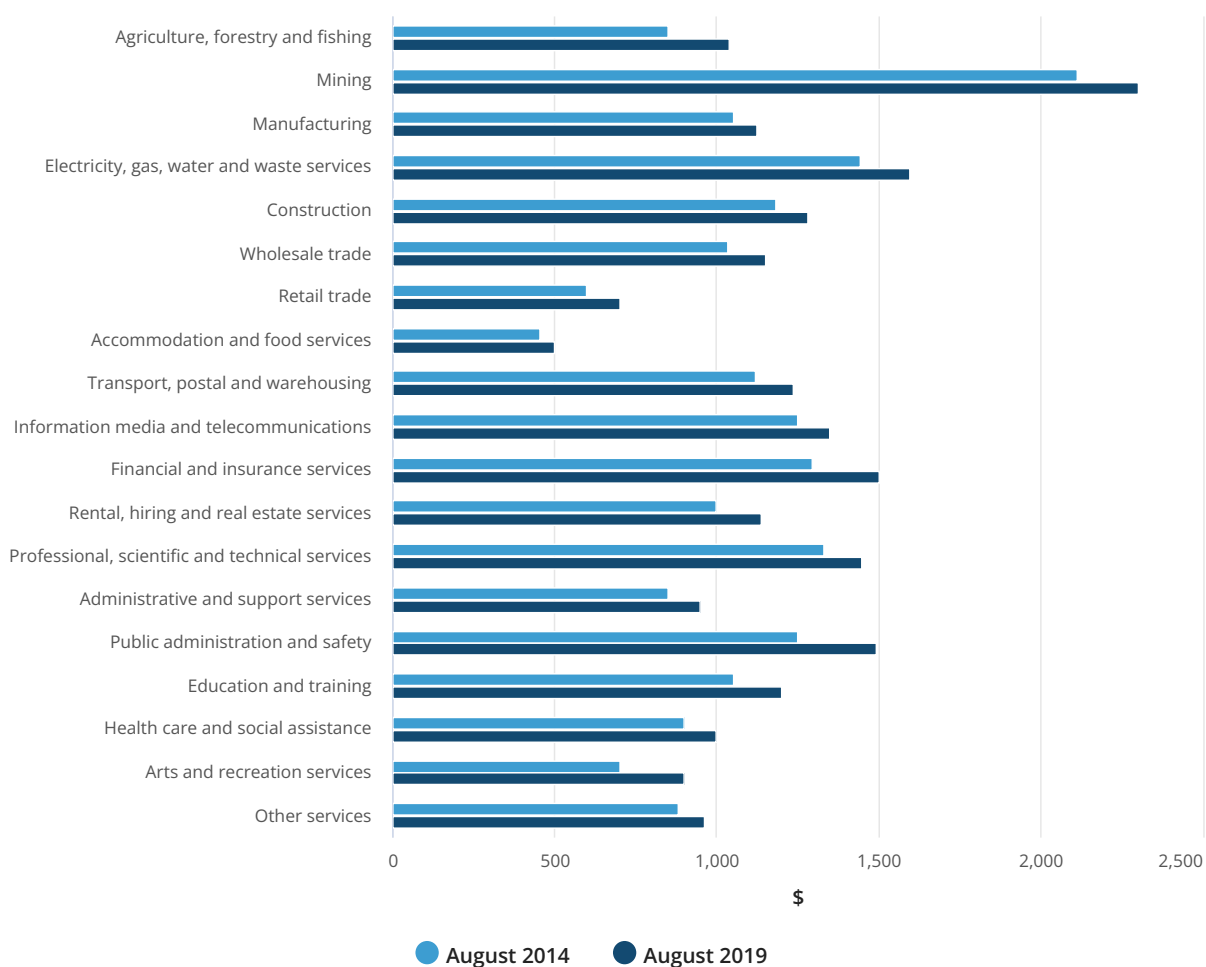
In August 2019, the industries with the highest median weekly earnings were:

- Mining (\$2,300 per week)
- Electricity, gas, water and waste services (\$1,597 per week)
- Financial and insurance services (\$1,500 per week) and
- Public administration and support services (\$1,495 per week).

The industries with the lowest median weekly earnings were:

- Accommodation and food services (\$500 per week)
- Retail trade (\$700 per week) and
- Arts and recreation services (\$898 per week).

Graph 4 - Median weekly earnings for employees by industry

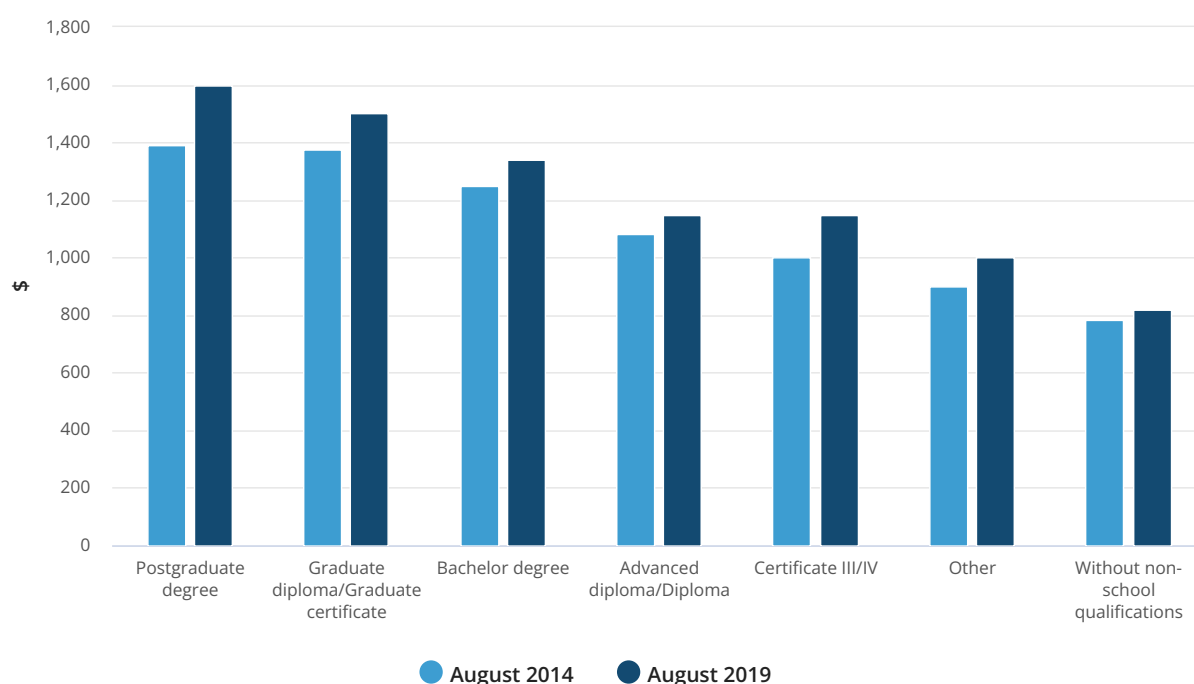


Source: Table 3.

Earnings by highest educational qualification

In August 2019, the highest median weekly earnings were for employees with a postgraduate degree (\$1,600 per week), while the lowest were those without non-school qualifications (\$820 per week). The largest increases in median weekly earnings, compared to August 2014, were for employees with a postgraduate degree (up \$210 per week), a Certificate III/IV (up \$150 per week) and a Graduate diploma/Graduate certificate (up \$123 per week).

Graph 5 - Median weekly earnings by highest educational qualification



Source: Table 5.

Working arrangements

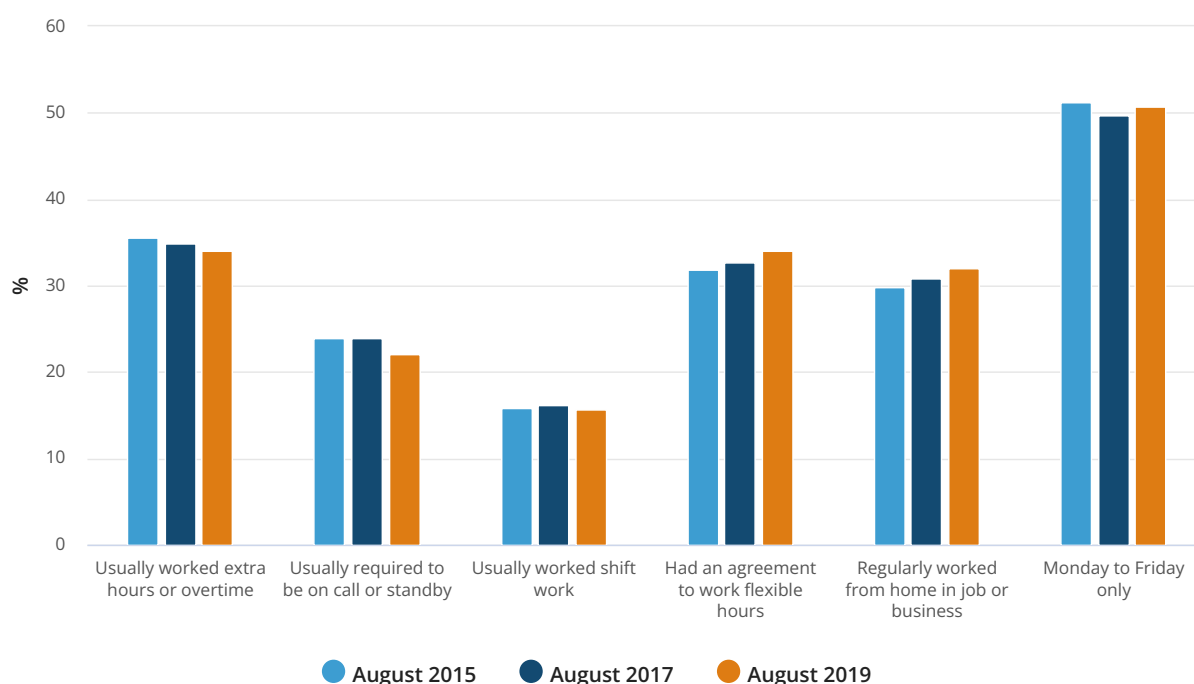
Between August 2015* and August 2019 there was an increase in the proportion of employed people who had an agreement to work flexible hours or regularly worked from home.

Over the same period there was a decrease in the proportion of employed people who were

usually required to work extra hours or overtime, or usually required to be on call or standby.

The proportion of employed people who usually worked shift work, or who have Monday to Friday as set working days has remained steady across the period.

Graph 6 - Percentage of employed people by working arrangement



Source: Table 7.

*Working arrangements is collected every second year for Characteristics of Employment. Data was collected in 2015, 2017 and 2019.

Independent contractors

Additional questions in the Characteristics of Employment survey allow employment relationships to be reclassified using the Form of Employment in main job classification (see [Forms of Employment \(Appendix\) \(https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/6333.0Appendix3August%202018\)](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts/6333.0Appendix3August%202018)). This enables people's employment

relationships to be classified as either:

- Employees;
- Independent contractors; or
- Other business operators.

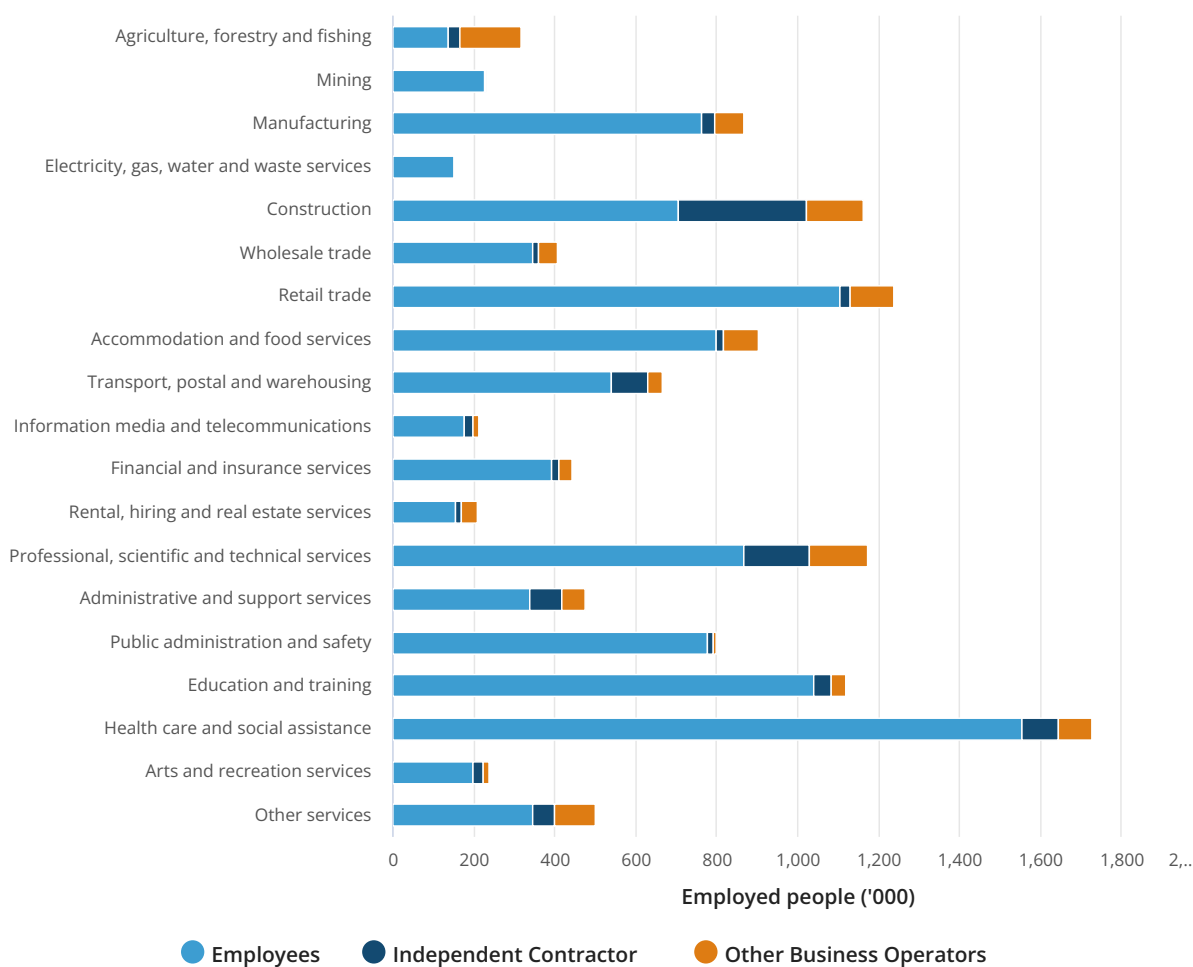
In 2019, the industries which had the highest percentage of independent contractors were Construction (27%), Administration and support services (17%) and Professional, scientific and technical services (14%).

The largest proportional increases for independent contractors from 2014 to 2019 were seen in Transport, postal and warehousing (10.7% to 13.2%), and Information media and telecommunications (5.7% to 9.3%).

The industries with the highest proportion of other business operators were Agriculture, forestry and fishing (48%) and Rental, hiring and real estate services (19%).

The industries with the highest proportion of non-employees (both independent contractors and other business operators) were Agriculture, forestry and fishing (56%) and Construction (39%).

Graph 7 - Number of employed people by forms of employment, by industry



Source: Table 10.

Improvements to characteristics of employment 2019

Improvements in the quality of earnings data

Following the [changes made in the 2017 cycle of Characteristics of Employment](https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts) (<https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Previousproducts>

[/6333.0Main%20Features2August%202017?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=6333.0&issue=August%202017&num=&view=\),](/6333.0Main%20Features2August%202017?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=6333.0&issue=August%202017&num=&view=),) the ABS has undertaken a further review of its imputation methodology. The review highlighted quality gains from making further improvements in the quality checking of reported data prior to imputation.

These improvements have been implemented and applied to the 2014-2018 period, resulting in revisions. The refinements resulted in negligible revisions to headline median time series, while the revisions to mean time series data have noticeably improved their coherence with other ABS earnings measures, particularly for male earnings.

History of changes

Show all

28/02/2020 - An issue has been identified in the compilation of estimates relating to 'whether worked weekdays and/or weekends in all jobs' in Table 7 (located in the Data downloads below). These estimates have been revised.

The titles for Tables 7.3, 7.6, 8.3 and 8.6 "Employees and OMIEs..." were corrected to "Employees, OMIEs and OMUEs...".

A broken URL was also replaced for the Forms of Employment (Appendix) link in the Key Findings page.

Data downloads

Table 1a Median earnings for employees by sex, state and full-time or part-time, 2004–2019

[↓ Download XLS](#)
[348.5 KB]

Table 1b Median earnings for employees by sex, state and status of employment, 2004–2019

[↓ Download XLS](#)
[344.5 KB]

Table 1c Median earnings for employees by state, full-time or part-time and status of employment, 2004–2019

[↓ Download XLS](#)
[392.5 KB]

Table 2 Median earnings for employees by demographic characteristics and full-time or part-time

[!\[\]\(125d701e9425b54c764340b5671b38cd_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[209 KB\]](#)

Table 2 Historical data: median earnings for employees by demographic characteristics and full-time or part-time

[!\[\]\(2bdfe261b986065ee0ac76460d6528c9_img.jpg\) **Download ZIP**](#)
[\[269.17 KB\]](#)

Table 3 Distribution of earnings for employees by industry

[!\[\]\(e78f798d4ea5c530c9db49e7d26e6b95_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[277.5 KB\]](#)

Table 3 Historical data: distribution of earnings for employees by industry

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[\[373.27 KB\]](#)

Table 4 Distribution of earnings for employees by occupation and skill level

[!\[\]\(05be7c7a8995decd503647c99211f7c2_img.jpg\) **Download XLS**](#)
[\[177.5 KB\]](#)

Table 4 Historical data: distribution of earnings for employees by occupation and skill level

[!\[\]\(dd161862f9164df98f62b726e9846241_img.jpg\) **Download ZIP**](#)
[\[223.98 KB\]](#)

Table 5 Distribution of earnings for employees by educational qualification

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[\[185 KB\]](#)

Table 5 Historical data: distribution of earnings for employees by educational qualification

[!\[\]\(a8f9309f944226d1420f5fed22e2b6e6_img.jpg\) **Download ZIP**](#)
[\[204.64 KB\]](#)

Table 6 Median earnings for employees by industry, occupation and educational qualification

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[\[221.5 KB\]](#)

Table 6 Historical data: median earnings for employees by industry, occupation and educational qualification

[!\[\]\(cbd8541a32dfc32f356f5c6c994b0a21_img.jpg\) **Download ZIP**](#)
[\[246.59 KB\]](#)

Table 7 Median earnings for employees and OMIEs by working arrangements

The titles for Tables 7.3 and 7.6 "Employees and OMIEs..." were corrected to "Employees, OMIEs and OMUEs...".

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[\[325 KB\]](#)

Table 7 Historical data: median earnings for employees and OMIEs by working arrangements

The titles for Tables 7.3 and 7.6 "Employees and OMIEs..." were corrected to "Employees, OMIEs and OMUEs...".

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[\[117.91 KB\]](#)

Table 8 Median earnings for employees and OMIEs by demographic characteristics

The titles for Tables 8.3 and 8.6 "Employees and OMIEs..." were corrected to "Employees, OMIEs and OMUEs...".

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[\[267 KB\]](#)

Table 8 Historical data: median earnings for employees and OMIEs by demographic characteristics

The titles for Tables 8.3 and 8.6 "Employees and OMIEs..." were corrected to "Employees, OMIEs and OMUEs...".

[!\[\]\(8bba887393ca45b761e5cb49e755e762_img.jpg\) **Download ZIP**](#)
[\[294.37 KB\]](#)

Table 9 Form of employment by demographic characteristics

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[\[233.5 KB\]](#)

Table 9 Historical data: form of employment by demographic characteristics

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[\[232.63 KB\]](#)

Table 10 Form of employment by industry, occupation and educational qualification

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[\[226.5 KB\]](#)

Table 10 Historical data: form of employment by industry, occupation and educational qualification

[!\[\]\(e50091943b385fe16d3277389202856f_img.jpg\) **Download ZIP**](#)
[\[272.14 KB\]](#)

All data cubes

[!\[\]\(179f167ede0522ebb4ea025b3ad78ca7_img.jpg\) **Download ZIP**](#)
[\[2.92 MB\]](#)

Survey material

Characteristics of employment questionnaire (sample only)

[↓ Download XLSX](#)

[152.98 KB]

Previous catalogue number

This release previously used catalogue number 6333.0.

Methodology

[Characteristics of Employment, Australia methodology, August 2019](#)